Hello Mark,

I hope you have been enjoying the rest of your trip, you had a couple of great days for Dram fest and Golf. I hope the wee earthquake this morning didn't bother anyone too much. Again thanks so much for coming out on Friday, I really enjoyed myself with you all and took away much from the tour myself. As promised I have some information for you all about the beers we all tasted on your evening with Barrel Tours.

The first bar we stopped at was The Institution on New Regent Street, we were able to taste five beers from various breweries around Christchurch and New Zealand. Our first beer was a Lager from Epic an Auckland Brewery, Epic make a lot of big hoppy Ales, However their Lager is a great starting point for a hot day as the cool clean taste is easily drinkable and sometimes goes down a bit quick. Great with lightly spiced food like Mexican and Thai.

Next up was Vulcan Breweries Bohemian Pilsner, this beer is brewed using Saas Hops, like traditional Pilsner from Pilsen where it originates. However with the addition of New Zealand Malts and the use of different water the taste is quite different from the original. Here is a heavier use of hop and malt in the brew which gives the brew more taste and a longer aftertaste.

We then tried Panhead Supercharger American Pale Ale, Panhead’s APA is an American Styled Pale Ale, and this means heavier hopping and whiter malts than roasted. This leads to a sweeter fruitier flavour and a big passionfruit Aroma which doesn’t carry through to the taste. A slightly bitter aftertaste means this beer would match well with a sweet Indian curry as the big sweet flavours would stand up to the big tastes of the curry.
Next we tried a **Behemoth Double India Pale Ale**, India Pale Ales are generously hopped so a double hopped IPA is somewhat over the top with hoppy flavours and bitterness. I like these big flavours but any more than one and I would need to eat something with equally strong flavours like the blue cheese we tasted which counters the bitterness of the beer and allows the sweeter flavours of the hops to come through. Behemoth are an Auckland brewery and can be found in bottle stores around Christchurch.

Lastly at The Institution we had a **Brew Moon, Dark Side of the Moon**. Brewed just north of Christchurch Brew Moon give us a lovely Stout that is not over the top with coffee and burnt caramel flavours. The beer has just enough of these flavours to make drinking it a pleasant experience. Matching with smoked food is perfect, anything from cheese, or fish to barbecued meats are ideal with this beer. However the greatest match for me is Oysters, traditionally a poor man’s drink and dinner in London the sea salt cuts through the beer and is enveloped by the maltiness of the stout leaving the drinker wanting for both more stout and oysters.

We then enjoyed a short walk to our next destination **Cassel and Son's CBD Bar**, here we tasted four of their range all brewed at the Cassel and Son's brewery at the Tannery in Woolston, Christchurch. Firstly we tried their **Local Lager** which did its job as a lager, the beer was a refreshing drop that on a hot day is easily drunk and paired with lightly spiced food such as Mexican or Thai chicken dishes, makes for a great food match. Next we tasted **Cassels Pilsner**, this beer was crisp and clean tasting the use of New Zealand varieties of the European ingredients gives the beer a different taste to traditional Pilsners, however this is not a bad thing the beer is a great addition to any oily meal. Seafood such as oily white fish in particular works well as do pork sausages. The beer will cut through the oil of the meal and cleanse the palate but not overpower the flavour as the beer is not a hugely flavourful brew.

We moved on to a **Pale Ale**, again made in the traditional English way with New Zealand varieties of Hops and Malts. The use of hop varieties that do not create a bitter taste and bringing a greater deal of maltiness to the brew, this pale ale is a fine match for savory English dishes like pies and roast beef.

Finally we tried **Cassel’s Milk Stout**, The beer is cask conditioned which means no carbonation or refrigeration, and the beer itself ferments differently in the cask and results in room temperature beer which is creamier than your normal offerings. With a lovely chocolate flavour that carries a hint of Milk powder, this beer is a great with a desert. Anything chocolate will work well.

Our last stop was **Dux Central Bar** where we tasted two of the huge number of beers available in their craft beer bar. Firstly we tried the **Ginger Tom**, possibly one of the Dux brand’s more recognizable offerings from back when they were based out of the Arts Centre before the Quakes. The Ginger Tom is and Alcoholic Ginger beer and provides the drinker with refreshment in spades.
The beer is a Lager which is low in flavor and spiced with fresh ginger and Cayenne pepper. The result is a hugely refreshing beer which surpasses most others for a sunny day drink, it is also a good starting point is having a beer on a stomach that is not 100% as the ginger will quell a sick stomach and put the drinker on the front foot again.

We then tried the Delicious Pale Ale from Ghost Breweries another Christchurch Brewery that operate out of the Three Boys brewery in Woolston. The guys at Ghost breweries make the beers for dux and their own beers which they supply to a number of bars around Christchurch. The DPA is a good session beer as the balance of hops and malt create a beer that hints at citrus flavours without intensifying too much, the drinker is left with a slight peppery taste and mouth feel which is overall pleasant and leaves you ready to dive in for more. This beer can be matched with good pub food like meat pies, or a burger.

I hope you enjoyed your time in Christchurch, and have a safe trip back across the ditch.

Thanks again.

Steve Riddell
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